

June 15 / Administration of George W. Bush, 2001

leader; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia.

Remarks at a State Dinner Hosted by President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland in Warsaw

June 15, 2001

Mr. President and Madam Kwasniewski, Mr. Prime Minister and Madam Buzek, distinguished guests, many of whom sacrificed for freedom. Laura and I are grateful for this great day—it's been a great day in Poland—and for this good company. You've made us feel most welcome.

I bring with me the affectionate greetings of the American people. Poland has a special place in our hearts, not just in places like Panna Maria, Texas, or Warsaw, Alabama, or Pulaski, Tennessee. Americans understand that we owe a lot to Poland. It has even been claimed that the old Polish game—an old Polish game was the earliest inspiration for baseball. *[Laughter]* If that's true, I owe more than most. *[Laughter]*

Today, our friendship is based upon a shared heritage and a hope for the future. When my father came to Warsaw in 1989, he declared that the cold war that began in Poland could end in Poland. Poles won their freedom with courage and determination. Americans from President Reagan to President Bush to President Clinton walked alongside you. Hope became reality. And Poland knows that when that happened, the world turned right side up. Poland became a mature democracy. Long a friend to America, we now proudly call you Ally. Yours is a moving story, and only you will ever know how difficult it was to write.

Mr. President, the United States greatly admires the leadership you have demonstrated these past 6 years. You understand that building a better future sometimes entails coming to grips with the past, even if that past is uncomfortable to some. America understands the value of reconcili-

ation, of overcoming old divisions. History looks well upon such leadership.

Mr. Prime Minister, the United States is deeply appreciative of your service to your country and to the cause of freedom. You understand that building a better future requires hard choices. The reformer is rarely rewarded and often criticized but then moves ahead with reform, nonetheless. History is kind to this type of leader, as well.

This week I've spoken to many leaders from across Europe about the challenges of unity and open commerce and peace. I am here today because America is convinced that we can meet those challenges in partnership with a strong and free Poland. We know we can count on Poland to remain true to its best traditions of tolerance, compromise, and determination that have brought you so far and so fast.

We know we can count on Poland to keep reaching out to its neighbors, showing them the way and helping them help themselves. We know we can count on Poland to continue its reforms. And Poland can count on America. We are in Europe to stay, because we know the danger of retreating behind the false security of an ocean.

Together, our countries know what faith, commitment, and integrity can build. Our partnership is going to last a long time, always mindful of where we have been; always moving forward to build the future we know we want, the future we know we can achieve.

My toast is for a free Poland, its leadership, and the courageous souls who made it happen.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:50 p.m. at the Presidential Palace. In his remarks, he referred to Jolanta Kwasniewska, wife of President Aleksander Kwasniewski, and Ludgarda Buzek, wife of Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek.

The President's Radio Address *June 16, 2001*

The First Lady. Good morning. This weekend millions of Americans will celebrate Father's Day. On this day sons and daughters pause to reflect on all the ways in which our fathers and grandfathers contribute to our lives, with ball games and Band-Aids, advice and sacrifice, patience and strength. Words fall short when we attempt to describe the full extent of our love and appreciation for them, when we try to express our gratitude for everything they do for us.

The fortunate among us know that we can always rely on a dad or a granddad. Sadly, there are those whose lives aren't touched by the loving hand of a father. I hope they, too, find a way to observe this day with a caring role model or other family members.

I am blessed to have many fond memories of my father. I remember fun trips together when I was a child, bumping along the dusty roads of west Texas in our car, heading for El Paso, where my grandmother lived.

My dad once said that when my mother brought him home to meet her parents for the first time, my grandmother was laying brick when they arrived. My dad thought he had married into a family whose women could do anything, and he made me believe that I could be anything.

Whether our fathers live one room away, a plane flight away, or years away in the twilight of our memories, we remember them as we commemorate Father's Day.

It's a day to acknowledge all the spoken words and unspoken kindnesses that fathers and grandfathers have shown us through the years.

So thank you for your strength, your love, and your support for your children. Happy Father's Day to all of you. And I want to wish a happy Father's Day to the father of my children: Happy Father's Day, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you, Laura.

Many Americans believe that their father is the finest man they have ever known. That's certainly true in my case. My dad provided me with life's greatest gift, unconditional love. And he still makes sure all his children know how much he loves us.

Fathers are so important in the lives of children: They provide love and encouragement; they are the object of a young child's admiration; and they provide their sons and daughters with an example of what it means to be a good man. When fathers are absent, children are often lost to a world of hopelessness and hardship. Our laws should promote responsible fatherhood.

And so our administration strongly supports community-based fatherhood programs. We are taking steps to make adoption more affordable. And for innocent children who are born into fractured families, we provide support for mentoring programs.

Ultimately, fatherhood is a deeply personal calling. Our own children are given to our care, and they depend on our love.